

MICHIGAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION

A State Department of History and Archives

BULLETIN NO. 9

PRIZE ESSAYS

WRITTEN BY

PUPILS OF MICHIGAN SCHOOLS

IN THE

LOCAL HISTORY CONTEST

FOR 1916-1917



LANSING, MICHIGAN
WYNKOOP HALLENBECK CRAWFORD CO., STATE PRINTERS
1917

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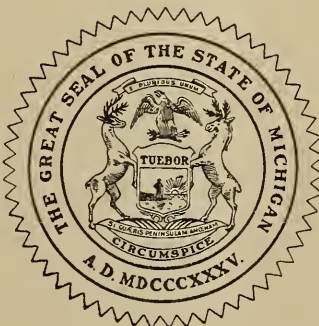
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PRIZE ESSAY CONTEST

THE prize essay contest for pupils in Michigan schools was arranged by the Michigan Daughters of the American Revolution and the Michigan Federation of Women's Clubs. The four essays published in this bulletin are the prizes for 1916-17. The essays for 1917-18 will be published in due course.

A few words in general may be said about the conditions and administration of this contest. The Daughters of the American Revolution have charge of it in towns where there are Chapters of that organization, and the Women's Clubs in towns where there are Clubs but no D. A. R. Chapters. The Superintendent of Public Instruction has charge in towns where there are neither Chapters nor Clubs.

Any pupil in High School, Parochial School, or Eighth Grade, is eligible to compete.

The subject of the 1916-17 contest was, "The First School and the Children who Attended It," in the city or village in which the writer lives. The subject for 1917-18 is, "Our Soldiers, Past and Present," in the city, village or school district in which the essay is written.

Two State prizes are offered, a first and a second prize, to each of two groups of writers. In 1915-16 first and second prizes were awarded for the history of a town of over ten thousand inhabitants, and similar prizes for the history of a town of under that number. In 1916-17 these prizes are awarded, in one group to all contestants under fifteen years of age, and in another to all over fifteen.

Local prizes are also offered, for which two suggestions are made in the announcement:

A. A framed picture of Lewis Cass, Territorial Governor of Michigan, as a first prize, the picture to bear a plate on which is inscribed the honor-pupil's name.

B. A framed picture of Stevens Thomson Mason, Boy Governor of Michigan, as a second prize, the picture to bear a plate on which is inscribed the honor-pupil's name.

A local committee for judging the essays is composed of the Superintendent of Schools, the Regent of the D. A. R. Chapter and the President of the Women's Club. Where there is no Chapter or Club in the town, the local committee consists of three people chosen by the Superintendent of Schools.

When the Local Committee has selected the first and second prize essays, it sends them to the chairman of the State committee, composed of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Secretary of the State Historical Commission (chairman), the State Regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the President of the State Federation of Women's Clubs.

All essays are passed upon by each member of the Committee, and those essays which receive the highest number of all votes are awarded the prizes. In case of a tie, all essays tied upon are awarded the State prize, which consists of publication of the essays in bulletin form by the Michigan Historical Commission.

The contest closes on Washington's Birthday (Feb. 22), and the announcement of the winners is made by the State Committee on or before June 1. The essays are published as soon thereafter as may be.

It is required that the essay be written by each pupil without help from any person in its composition. No essay should be over two thousand words in length.

The essays are judged according to the following standards:

A. Original work done by the writer. This includes the use of original sources, such as interviews with participants in the events described, consultation of original documents, and contemporary letters and newspapers.

B. Accuracy in the use of dates and citation of authorities. The authority for a specially important statement of historic fact is required to be given in a footnote.

C. Method of treatment. Pupils are advised to write simple, idiomatic English, and not to attempt fine writing; to avoid the use of slang, provincialisms or unnecessary technical phrases; and not to use foreign terms when there are English equivalents. On the other hand, picturesque phrases, good anecdotes, novel ways of looking at things, words in use during the time of the events described but now obsolete, when taken from original sources, add vivacity and flavor to the essay, and should be used.

Teachers are requested to make the writing of the essay a part of the course in English as well as in history, and to lend their active interest in promoting the contest.

State prizes in 1916-17 are awarded as follows:

Over 15 years of age, to

1. Cornelia Richardson, Bay City.
2. Marjorie Poundstone, Benton Harbor.

Under 15 years of age, to

1. Edward Brigham, Battle Creek.
2. Russell Holmes, Ludington.

The following were accorded honorable mention:

Alden, Achsa.....	Cadillac
Babcock, Cecelia.....	Spring Lake
Boyer, Kathleen.....	Three Rivers
Carpenter, Helen M.....	Spring Lake
Chatagnier, Stella.....	Chesaning
Dean, Deborah.....	Cadillac
Dodds, Gertrude Mae.....	Mt. Pleasant
Dumas, Faith.....	Detroit
Dykema, Anne E.....	Spring Lake

Givisdale, Angeline.....	Auburn
Greenebaum, Lucille.....	Chesaning
Grolean, George.....	Muskegon
Hand, William.....	Three Rivers
Hess, Caroline.....	Detroit
Hill, Frances.....	Montague
Hollinger, Janet.....	Battle Creek
Holly, Dorothy.....	Charlotte
Klepper, Gussie.....	Bay City
LaPres, Francis.....	Muskegon
Leiphart, Dorothy.....	Willard
Maine, Isabell.....	Detroit
McDowell, Fermor.....	Detroit
McLachlan, Edith.....	Mt. Pleasant
Palm, Albert.....	Ludington
Pflanzer, A.....	Detroit
Pollard, Harry S.....	Detroit
Raub, Harold C.....	Marshall
Rice, Alice May.....	Flat Rock
Rockwell, Sylvia.....	Allegan
Smith, Marguerite.....	Montague
Stevenson, Ruth.....	St. Joseph
Swanson, Alfreda.....	Spring Lake
Vail, Eloise.....	St. Joseph
Van Ness, George.....	Allegan
Warden, Loretta.....	Ludington
Wills, Marjorie Frances.....	Benton Harbor

THE FIRST SCHOOLS IN BAY CITY

BY CORNELIA M. RICHARDSON

YEARS ago when the great western territory so long the home of wild animals began to be opened to civilization, the village of Bay City sprang up on the east bank of the Saginaw river. For several years it consisted of about four houses, a hotel, a dock, and a warehouse. But people moving to the West saw the great wealth in the forests around the village and settled here and built homes. Then great lumber mills arose, and Bay City flourished and prospered. About this time people saw the need of a school where their children might receive an education, and so plans were speedily drawn up for the erection of a school-house.

The first school on the land now covered by Bay City (then called, however, Saginaw), was held in a little log shanty on a farm in Hampton township owned by Captain Wilson. It was near the river on what is now Twenty-third street, but in 1840 or about that time Bay City did not extend to Twenty-third street, so the first school in the village of Bay City was situated on the banks of Saginaw river at the foot of what is now Washington avenue. The Gustin, Cook and Buckley buildings are thought to cover the spot where this little school stood.

Unlike the schools of today, this little school house of long ago was nothing more than a clapboard cabin with two or three very small windows that let the light into one small and, I imagine, rather dingy room. There were no pictures on the walls nor were there any handsomely varnished seats placed in neat rows; instead, the walls were rough pine boards, and the desks consisted of one hard bench built all around the room a short distance

out from the walls. The pupils, about twelve in number, sat on this bench with their faces toward the wall. As paper was very scarce they had to write on slates. What a noise there must have been when the pupils were doing their "spellin' and 'rithmetic"!

The school grounds were nothing more than a clearing around the school where the trees had been cut down. The stumps were still standing, but the pupils did not mind that. All they wanted was a place where they could play in the fresh air at recess.

To Miss Trombley, a young lady of the village, belongs the honor of being the first teacher. After teaching a few years she went west, and not long afterwards news was received that she had been killed by the Indians.

At the time of this school Wenona, now West Bay City, boasted several houses, and several of the pupils from there had to cross the river to attend. In those days Saginaw river was much wider than now, and no bridge had been built across it. The pupils of Wenona had to cross the river on rafts and later in rowboats. On windy days it was almost impossible to cross the river, so the attendance of the pupils could not be perfect.

Mr. Gano was the next teacher after Miss Trombley. While he was teaching, the Pitt Mill was erected very near the school house, by which time also the number of pupils had increased so much that the building was taxed to its capacity. For these two reasons it was deemed advisable to move the school to another part of the city. The little school house became a woodshed in connection with the mill and it is thought that later on it was burned.

When Bay City celebrated home-coming week a few years ago the citizens were given a treat that few others have had. The little school house of Bay City of long ago was reproduced in the great parade. The pioneers said that a more perfect reproduction could not have been made, for the school was exactly like the old one, even to a large three-cornered piece that had been torn out of one side of the building.

On Third street between Washington and Adams there was a

large building owned by Mr. Dodge, one part of which was occupied by a bakery shop and the other by a bowling alley. It was in this bowling alley that the second school in Bay City was located. In this building the pupils had desks; but they were of every kind, sort, and description, for each pupil furnished his or her own desk. There were no stores where one could buy desks, so father was compelled to chop a tree down, take the lumber to the mill where it was sawed into boards, and then make the desk himself. In this school Mr. Gano and Mrs. Ferris were the two teachers whom the pioneers seem to remember.

There was no yard around the bowling alley, so at recess the pupils went down to the river to play. Here they spent many happy hours floating on rafts; or when no raft was available, poling around the river on logs. Some even ventured out on the logs as far as the middle of the river. This was very dangerous, for the river was very deep, but no one thought of danger when having so much fun.

James Barney was one of the youngest pupils who attended school in the bowling alley. He lived quite a distance from the school, near what is now Belinda street. One day in winter when James was on his way home from school a snowstorm came up and little James lost his way. Men were sent out to find him. After quite a search he was found in a snowbank almost dead. He was so cold that the tears were frozen solid on his cheeks.

Another experience of the school children was in early spring. When the ice froze on the river in winter it was very solid, though not very thick; in early spring, even though the ice was thick, it was like rubber. Sometimes a person would sink right down in a spot that looked perfectly solid. One day in early spring a crowd of young school children went skating on the river. For some reason or other they all gathered in a bunch in the middle of the ice. A man standing on the shore saw the ice begin to sink, and knowing that the children would all be drowned if they stayed there he called to them to scatter. The children scattered immediately, and no one was drowned.

All this time Bay City had been growing rapidly. It was not long before one teacher was not enough to teach all the pupils. Besides this the bowling alley was small for a school. Accordingly, the city bought a piece of land on Adams street between Fourth and Fifth streets. A three-room building was erected here. It had one room on the second floor for the upper grades and two rooms on the first floor for the lower grades. This building is now the back wing of the Salvation Army Citadel.

Three teachers were needed to conduct this school. The upper-grade teacher was also the principal of the school. There were several teachers, but as little can be found about them I can give only their names: Mr. Gano, Mr. Bacon, Miss Lovell and Miss Braddock (who were sub-teachers under Mr. Bacon), Reverend Root (the Presbyterian minister), Mr. Heisordt, Mr. Dunham, Miss Julia Cummings, Miss Cornelia Chillson, and Miss Ellen Chamberlain.

Up to September 1865 the schools of Bay City were under the control of school district No. 2 of the township of Hampton. At this time the citizens of Bay City formed the "school district of Bay City." Plans were made and in a short time an addition was built to the school on Adams street. The building now comprises the whole of the Salvation Army Citadel. This school was used for many years; but it was not the only school in the city, for several ward schools were soon erected.

Perhaps from the description of the schools one might think that the pupils were rough and ignorant. This idea is wrong, for all the pupils were the children of very well-educated people. It might be well to give here the names of some of the first pupils; of course the list is not entirely correct, for many of the pupils have long been forgotten. Among the first were: Margaret Campbell, Joshua Pierce, Cordelia Pierce, John and Kate DeFo, Esther Rogers, and Richard Olmstead; later on, Cornelia Moots, then Cornelia Chillson and her sister Caroline. Mrs. Faxon attended. I put these last two names in for I am glad to claim Mrs. Moots as my grandmother and Mrs. Faxon as my great-aunt.

Soon after Bay City began to increase in size, people saw what a beautiful place the west bank of the Saginaw river was,

and consequently many moved over and settled in what was called the village of Wenona. As it is now West Bay City, I thought something should be said of its first schools.

In 1860 a landowner in Wenona donated a lot to the village for a school site. A neat little house was erected and pupils from all over Bangor township assembled there for instruction. For several years after it had been abandoned as a school house it was used as the polling place of elections for Bangor.

In 1868 a new brick school house was erected on the Bay City and Midland Plank road, about one-half mile from the river. This building was capable of holding three hundred and sixty pupils. Mr. Cummings was the first principal of the new school. He was known as a very accomplished teacher. In one of the old histories of Bay County there was found a funny story about him which would be the best description anyone could give of him. As the story goes, Mr. Cummings was having a hard time to make his pupils behave one winter day. At last, just about in despair, he promised them a sleighride as soon as possible if they would behave. All was quiet immediately, and for several weeks afterward. At last the snow became just right.

The pupils were told to meet at the school at a certain time, and of course everyone was there promptly. A few minutes later the teacher drove up with a large bob-sled drawn by a mule. It is said the pupils had a delightful ride even though going at the surprising rate of a mile an hour.

Not long after this a central high school was erected, and then from time to time more schools were added until now West Bay City has eight very good buildings.

The prophecy of the explorer De Tocqueville has certainly been fulfilled in every respect; he said, "In a few years these impenetrable forests will have fallen, the sons of civilization will break the silence of the Saginaw, the banks will be imprisoned by quays; its current which now flows on unnoticed and tranquil through a nameless waste will be stemmed by the prows of vessels. We were perhaps the last travelers allowed to see the primitive grandeur of this solitude."

Thus all things change. The new grows out of the old. The process by which this is done contains the lessons of history, and the period between the first school and the present day in Bay City schools is a field of study than which few others have more to teach us.

THE FIRST SCHOOL IN BATTLE CREEK AND THE CHILDREN WHO ATTENDED IT

BY EDWARD MORRIS BRIGHAM, JR.

THE first schoolhouse in Battle Creek was built in 1834 under the old Territorial Law which compelled every township containing fifty or more inhabitants to hire a schoolmaster to teach the children reading and writing and instruct them in the English and French languages, as well as in good behavior.

The little group of pioneers who had at that time settled on or near the site of the present city were of a kind to enjoy the privileges of this law. The majority of them were either from New England or were of New England descent. Most of them had been educated in Eastern schools which at that time were of course the best in the country. Many among the early settlers in and near Battle Creek, as well as in southern Michigan generally, came directly from New York. They had entered a real wilderness to be sure but they came with the spirit of progress and so the school was one of the first important developments in this early community. A tax of sixty dollars was levied for the schoolhouse, although eighty dollars was the sum paid to Deacon Salter who had the contract for its construction.

The first schoolhouse was built of logs from trees that stood near where it was erected. The nearest sawmill was located at Bellevue and lumber was brought from there for the floor, casings and desks. The fact that this lumber was floated twenty miles down the Battle Creek river instead of being hauled over the wagon road, a distance of only ten miles, clearly shows that the highways of that day were extremely poor. The schoolhouse was built on or near the intersection of Main and Monroe

streets. It was a low structure with but one room, fifty feet in length. The roof sloped towards the road. The building was lighted by means of one door and several small windows. Its furniture consisted of simply constructed benches for the pupils and an equally simple table for the teacher's desk. The benches were fastened lengthwise to the walls of rough logs, so the backs of the pupils rested against the logs and the plaster which filled the spaces between them.

The first schoolmaster was Warren B. Shepard who had just arrived from the East. Mr. Shepard was but twenty-four years old and was a wide-awake school man of his time. He had come directly from the schools of Sardinia, his native place in York State, where he had taught two years. This two years' practice followed his preparation for teaching in the Academy of Aurora, New York. On leaving the Academy he received a "teaching recommend," which would now be called a certificate, from the head of the institution, Professor George Washington Johnson. The "recommend" is an interesting paper. It shows that the first teacher Battle Creek ever had was well educated and was a credit to the Academy in every way. The following is a copy of the "recommend" which is now in possession of Warren Shepard's daughter who still lives in Battle Creek:

Aurora Academy, November 26th, 1821.

Warren B. Shepard has attended Aurora Academy and received instructions in Reading, Spelling, Penmanship, Geography, a review of "Cobb's Rudiments," "Kirkham's Grammar," "Parsing," "Daboll's Arithmetic," "Blair's Oratory," Rhetoric and Surveying.

His deportment has been that of a gentleman.

George Washington Johnson.

The young schoolmaster arrived in Battle Creek in the spring of 1834 and in the fall was engaged to open the new schoolhouse. He is said to have been a good-natured young man with a keen sense of humor and many are the stories told of the ready wit of Battle Creek's first schoolmaster. Warren Shepard is described as being at this time a tall, slender, dark-haired man, with keen

black eyes, though in later life photographs show him to have been of a stouter build, and with a broad face and full beard.

The pupils of this first school numbered about a dozen, though the names of only nine, five girls and four boys, are now obtainable. The girls were Hannah and Lucinda Angell, Eliza and Ellen M. Hall, and Mary McCamly. The boys who attended this school were William Kirk who came in from Goguac Prairie, Hastings Hall, and Albert and Ezra Convis.

Quill pens were used for writing, and slates were used for "ciphering," for there were no blackboards. The books used were the "Old English Reader," "Daboll's Arithmetic," "Woodbridge and Olney's Geographies," "Kirkham's Grammar," and the old "Columbian Spelling Book."

The children played games at the morning recess. They brought their dinners, which they ate at noon—the big recess. The children played in the nearby forest and gathered flowers while waiting for the bell to ring. As is the custom now in the country schools, they were dismissed early in the afternoon.

Sometimes the friendly Potowatomi Indians visited the school, which rather frightened the younger children. The Indians somewhat feared Mr. Shepard, thinking him a French missionary who had come from far off to teach the "pale face" children to read.

The birch rod was used on the children as a means of punishment. Slight offenses caused a boy or girl to be made to sit on the "dunce block."

From the schoolhouse could be heard the rumbling whir of the flour mill and the clang of the anvil of John Marvin's Smithy. Back of the schoolhouse was the race which was built by Judge Sands McCamly on his return to Battle Creek from Marshall. He went to Marshall after finding that three government surveyors had applied at the land office to buy the land where Battle Creek now stands. The two village stores which were owned by William Coleman and Mr. David D. Daniels were next to the village school. In fact almost all of the village buildings and houses were clustered about the schoolhouse. A little way off was the mysterious forest with its Indians and wild animals.

This building was also the social center of the settlement of that time. The old Lyceum held its debates in the schoolhouse, some of the members of which were Judge Wm. Hall, Capt. John Marvin, Moses Hall, Dr. Wm. Campbell, Erastus Hussey, and Wm. Coleman. On Sunday in this building the Baptists were led in the study of the Bible by Rev. Robert Adams, and the Methodists also held meetings there. All general meetings and lectures were held here.

Soon this schoolhouse was too small for the number of pupils who wanted to attend, so after some discussion over the matter it was decided to erect another building. This one was situated on the site of the smaller one, which was torn down. Later on another was built on another site, and later (1871) this was in turn destroyed to give place to the present No. 1 building.

Mr. Shepard in later life married and had two daughters, Emily A., and Amande M. Shepard, the latter now Mrs. Goff, both of whom still live on the Shepard homestead on the outskirts of Battle Creek. Warren Shepard died in 1875 at the age of sixty-five years.

Battle Creek's schools now rank among the foremost in the entire country and show better perhaps than any other institution how much and how well Battle Creek has grown since it was founded eighty-seven years ago. And who can say that much of the present high standard of our schools may not be due to the splendid beginning under Warren Shepard, the schoolmaster in the old log schoolhouse.

My sources are: Interview with Miss Emily A. Shepard, a daughter of Warren B. Shepard, the first schoolmaster of Battle Creek.

Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. III, p. 348.

Supt. W. G. Coburn's lecture, "The early Schools of Battle Creek," given before the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, January 25, 1917.

Thomas M. Cooley's "Michigan," Chapter XII, pages 239-240.

BENTON HARBOR'S FIRST SCHOOL AND THE PUPILS WHO ATTENDED IT

BY MARJORIE POUNDSTONE

IN the year 1862, when our town bore the name of Brunson Harbor, and boasted a population of six hundred, when even in imagination the people could not conceive of any good roads or good lights, this village which was then composed of a huddled group of stores and residences decided to have a schoolhouse.¹ Raising the necessary funds for this purpose was no easy task, but the people accomplished it, mainly through assessments. After purchasing the plot of land on which the Central School building of today stands they succeeded in having a small low frame building 24 by 36 feet erected on the corner of this ground nearest the present Methodist Episcopal church.

The structure was unpainted and had one story. It had a bell tower, the proud possessor of a small bell. There was no glass in the doors, but the windows had small panes like those found in our modern French windows. The interior was rather a stuffy place. On first opening the door one saw a small partitioned space which was termed "The Wardrobe," in which the pupils hung their wraps and dinner pails on the hooks adorning the otherwise plain, unpainted wall. Two small windows furnished meager light. From each side of the wardrobe a door led into the schoolroom,² in the front of which was a platform on which stood the teacher's strong wooden desk. On the desk a ruler of extraordinary thickness reposed—when not in use. In the center of this room was a box stove, a rectangular black

¹A. H. Rowe, Stanley Morton, and Mrs. Johnson.

²John Lawrence, personal interview.

looking object, which furnished the needed warmth.³ On one side of this was a huge wood-pile, serving for two purposes; first, as fuel; second, as a place for recreant pupils and "dunces." The room's remaining space was filled with rows of long, carved, wooden desks, back of which ran low, hard benches with capacity to seat a dozen boys and girls; besides these there were charts, maps and a slate.

The first teacher who presided at the sturdy desk on the platform seems to have been Miss Emily McClave.⁴ Each of her pupils was charged fifty cents a week for tuition. Funny experiences sometimes varied the long winter hours. For instance, Miss McClave's boys fixed the stovepipe several times in such a way that when anyone suddenly stamped his foot the pipe came down with a dreadful crash and emptied its sooty contents upon the floor.

The visits of the director were generally dreaded by the pupils, for at such times the children must know their lessons specially well, and it was "woe to the one that did not." The girls with their neatly braided pigtails of hair and clean calico aprons and the boys with their tight-fitting knickerbockers and cumbersome boots always had to sit up straight on their benches, with hands bright and clean from recent scrubbings.

Mr. George Washington Toles,⁵ justice of the peace, in his leisure hours taught this school in 1865. Mr. Stanley Morton, one of Benton Harbor's oldest and most influential residents was a pupil of both teachers. Mr. Morton is still living, in a beautiful colonial home on Morton Hill. He has done and is still doing a great deal toward beautifying our city. Ova Nutting who passed away last fall, John Robinson, Mrs. Wendell Robins and Mrs. Spencer Van Horn, were also pupils of these instructors.⁶

The next winter Mr. William Hess, having returned safely from the Civil War taught this school. Mr. James Pender claims that Mr. Hess was the first school teacher, but after inter-

³John Pender's *History of Benton Harbor*.

⁴Mr. Morton (her pupil), Mr. Lawrence, Mr. McClave (her brother).

⁵Mrs. Johnson, A. H. Rowe, and John Lawrence (personal interviews).

⁶Names of scholars secured from Stanley Morton.

viewing several of the old soldiers and residents I have concluded that he was not the first teacher but taught the year after the war. Mr. Hess was of such a plain, genial disposition and so popular that he became the victim of a nickname, and was known as "Billy Hess." It gave considerable amusement to humorously inclined gentlemen of the town to question the youngsters as follows:

"Do you go to school?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who is your teacher?"

"Billy Hess."⁷

Mr. Hess after a term of teaching retired from the school and took up carpenter work, his regular trade, which he followed in Benton Harbor for many years, after which he left for California.⁸ He was succeeded in the school by John C. Lawrence who taught during 1867 and 1868. Several of his pupils living are Mrs. Cynthia Winslow, Henry Diamond, Mrs. Brammal who lives in the former Hess home, and George Thresher. Both John C. Lawrence and Miss Hess, William's sister, who assisted her brother at times are both living.

Several amusing incidents occurred during his teaching. One afternoon a little girl who was always bent on mischief would not obey him. Mr. Lawrence made her sit on the hard splintery wood-pile by the side of the old box-stove which was blazing merrily away. Suddenly a knock was heard at the door and in came a few select visitors. Of course Mr. Lawrence told the girl that she could take her seat, but she was stubborn and refused to do so, and consequently after sitting by the stove all the afternoon she was badly blistered.⁹ At another time he was bothered by a sixteen-year-old girl, not very bright, who had a habit of falling asleep during school and causing much annoyance as well as amusement by her ceaseless snores. On this particular afternoon she made more noise than usual and Mr. Lawrence, unable to stand the racket longer, picked up his ebony

⁷Anecdote taken from Pender's *History of Benton Harbor*.

⁸Miss Hess, his sister, claims he was the third teacher, and not the first.

⁹John C. Lawrence.

ruler and gave her several smart slaps on the shoulder with it. This made her exceedingly angry and she left school for good. Everybody talked about this episode. Some said it was a shame for him to have hit a girl on the shoulder so; but he said, "I am glad she did leave school because she was naturally dull and stupid and caused a great deal of trouble." Such cases would be treated differently nowadays.

Evenings during the week, the church choir met in the building for rehearsal, and on Sundays the regular meetings of the church, which was undenominational, were held there.¹⁰ Social events were held there too, until the American Hotel was built and its dining hall became the village's auditorium.

Mr. John Lawrence had one hundred and twelve scholars in the one room of the old building. As his attendance increased he was given a neighboring tenement house by Cushion Burr, in which he placed the pupils of the first three grades under the new instructor Miss Bowman, who taught them the alphabet, the primer and the speller. Mr. Lawrence taught all of the grades in the old building and instructed the older ones in the higher branches like geometry and trigonometry.

An incident occurred one day that amused many. A little colored fellow who had broken out with small-pox entered Miss Bowman's room, who as soon as she saw him hastily if not gracefully climbed out of the window and ran to Mr. Lawrence. She told him that unless he sent the boy back to his home she would quit "right then and there." Mr. Lawrence hastened to her class and sent the lad away.¹¹

It was a custom of the scholars to hold debates on various topics in the school-house in the evening, and one time they were debating on Negro suffrage. Among the people assembled was a drunken man. As the debate waxed hot and just as the judges were about to decide in favor of the "non-suffrage" side this man stood up and called out, "Anyone who thinks a Negro should not suffer is a —— fool." Of course this caused much amusement and the man was put out of the meeting.

¹⁰Mr. Lawrence and Charles Warner.

¹¹John Lawrence.

Showing how dearly his pupils loved Mr. Lawrence, when he was leaving the school they presented him with a large-sized dictionary bearing an inscription in George Thresher's handwriting, and a copy of "The Earth's Structure" by Alexander Von Humboldt, both of which he still treasures.

The first class to graduate from this building held their exercises in the new Baptist church. All the girls wore black and white dresses "fluffed" at the necks and sleeves, and having long sweeping trains. Mrs. Johnson, the dressmaker, who had the arduous task of fitting them said, "I dreamed of black and white for weeks and weeks after."¹²

In 1891 the school was incorporated under the county school system and became district No. 9.¹³ Just before the new building was erected a part of this old building was given to Mr. William Hess who had just returned from California and was living across the street. He had it made into a barn and it still is used as such by its present owner, Mrs. Brammal who was one of John Lawrence's pupils.¹⁴ The other part was sold to the Universalists for a church. They in turn sold it to the Colored church, the members of which moved it onto Brunson avenue. As the majority of the colored population did not exactly favor the "church idea," they secretly set it on fire one night and burned it to the ground. It was never rebuilt. Nevertheless on the old school ground a new building was erected and this is still used as a grade school.

¹²Personal interview with Mr. Johnson

¹³John Lawrence.

¹⁴Messrs. Morton, Warner and Rowe.

FIRST SCHOOL OF THIS VICINITY AND CHILDREN WHO ATTENDED

Part I

THE VILLAGE OF PERE MARQUETTE

JUST as the sun was setting, around the bend of a beautiful quiet little river came a canoe, in which, standing, was a rather elderly looking man garbed in the long black robes of the priesthood. He was the only white man in the canoe; the rest were Indians. As the canoe grated upon the beach, Pere Marquette, for such it was, and his Indian followers stepped out upon the shore.

Not many days after the landing, the same man who had come to Christianize the Indians had passed away while at his prayers. They laid him on a little mound close to the river's edge and marked his resting place with a crude wooden cross.

* * *

It was more than two hundred years after the little scene just portrayed had taken place—to be exact, in the year 1849—when a few hardy pioneers came across Lake Michigan and settled not far from the place where the good Father and his little band of Indians had landed. Soon a building was taking shape and when it was finally completed it was known as “Baird and Bean’s Sawmill.”¹

The channel was not wide here, and if lumber were to be shipped this needs must be remedied; and so, under the direction of Mr. Charles Mears, the channel was changed to its present location. All was now ready for the sawing and shipping of lumber.

¹*History of Manistee, Mason and Oceana Counties, Michigan*, p. 18; also an interview with Mrs. F. G. Dowland, February 10, 1917.

Then the little village began to grow. Besides the few dwelling houses and the sawmill there was built a small store upon the docks. A new mill boarding-house, later the "Filer House," was begun in the autumn of 1865 and finished early in the spring of 1866. The old boarding-house was a primitive affair, being a long one-story building situated where the Flint and Pere Marquette depot later stood. Beyond was a long row of rude shanties ranged along an alleged street known by the highly significant name of "Saw-Dust Avenue." This romantic thoroughfare dodged along among the stumps until it lost its identity in the woods. The sawmill was located on the south parts of the lots south of what is now Goodnough's gristmill and east of what is now Culver park. It was situated near Saw-Dust avenue. Along with the sawmill a little building was built for some lumbering work; in this the first school was born.

In the spring of 1865 Miss Sarah Melendy gathered a few children and started the school. However, of her rule I have not been able to find anything of much interest. Then in the summer of 1865 Miss Tibbits came to succeed Miss Melendy and taught until October of 1866, when Miss E. C. Mitchell, later Mrs. F. G. Dowland, took charge.² It is of her rule that I have been able to find the most material about the little school. Miss Nellie Mills succeeded Mrs. Dowland in 1867 and taught until 1868.

Part II

THE FIRST SCHOOL³

In the summer of 1867 it was truly quite a picturesque scene that one could see on coming to the sawmill and the little school in the hollow. The silent waters that flowed by were filled with logs floating down to the sawmill. Great lumber camps were kept busy supplying the mill with logs. Then the logs were made ready, the lumber sawed and cut, and then shipped across the lake.

²*History of Manistee, Mason and Oceana Counties, Mich.*, p. 19; interview with Mrs. F. G. Dowland on January 8, 1917; Mr. Dowland was the bookkeeper for the Pere Marquette Lumber Co.

³Interview with Mrs. F. G. Dowland, February 10, 1917.

The great mill stands there with its loud buzzing saw near the peaceful pine forest that towers above all. Now and then an occasional call of some bird is heard in the great forest. You can see the workmen going to and from work, the little tugs hauling the great lumber barges in and out of the harbor, for the channel is not deep enough to allow vessels to use their own power. The busy people are going about the village and on the main thoroughfare, Sawdust avenue. And last of all, there is the little weather-beaten schoolhouse which adds the last touch to this little scene of the village of Pere Marquette.

The little school stood in a hollow not far from Sawdust avenue. The building was small, about 25 by 20 feet. It was the only schoolhouse until 1867 when the Central School was erected. It looked as though it might have been painted brown, it was so badly weather-beaten. There was but one room in the little school. This was lighted by six windows, three on the north side and three on the south side. The walls were whitewashed and the blackboards were smooth boards painted black which were cleaned with a damp cloth. Some of the children were seated on long benches while others sat on chairs or school seats. The teacher's desk was like many of those in use today, opening at the top. The room was heated by a large box-stove such as was used in those days. Slates were used by all the pupils and in that one little room were pupils whose ages ranged from two and one-half to twenty years. The oldest pupil was one Edgar Allen, twenty years of age. There were about thirty children in all.

No studies in particular were taught, for in those days regular school systems were not established, on account of the scarcity of books. But no matter; if a pupil could obtain an educational book of any sort, that one was used. This was the only way of solving the schoolbook problem. No two children were in the same book under Miss Mitchell's rule.

Some of the children who attended the first school were the Danaher children—Molly, Katie, Conrad, Will and James. The smallest Danaher boy, Leonard, came often as a visitor. There were the two Foster boys—Frank and Eddie, sons of L. H. Foster;

the Sterling children, Louis and Kate, the latter now a teacher in the Ludington high school. Others were the Abairs and Peter Glasmire, now a lawyer in Manistee, and a very mischievous boy he was too; the story is told that when the teacher, Miss Mitchell, arrived at the schoolhouse one morning, upon opening her desk frogs began to jump out in every direction. Knowing well who the culprit was, she said, "Here, Peter Glasmire, are your pets. Put them where they belong." However, the children were not generally mischievous.

The teacher was paid by Mr. L. H. Foster, acting as agent for the school board. She was paid "fifty dollars a month and keep."

Part III

END OF THE FIRST SCHOOL AND BEGINNING OF THE SECOND

The little shanty in which the first school was held lasted much longer than the school itself. The school had changed teachers four times and had lived through a period of three years, had helped many to get their first knowledge of books, and had started into life persons who were to become leading influences in the community and in places round about. It was among the first things in the little village. The shanty had come for one purpose and had grown into another which was of more benefit to the city, had completed its work, and about the time that salt was first discovered here it was torn down to make room for piling lumber. Thus came and went the first school.

But the little village continued to grow. In 1873 it was no longer a village but the City of Ludington, named after James Ludington, who was one of the main influences in its building. Many people still suppose that the name of the place was changed from Pere Marquette to Ludington at the time that the city was incorporated in 1873. Such however is not the fact, the name having been applied when the postoffice of that name was established here. The township retains the name of Pere Marquette under which it was organized, while the name of Ludington dates from the time when the post-office was established here,

as stated above; when the city was incorporated in 1873 it voted to retain the name.

Mr. Ludington soon came into possession of much property in the city and donated \$5,000 to be expended on the county and city public buildings.

As the city grew it needed to have a large building for educational purposes; so, shortly before 1867, a building situated where the present Hansen pharmacy is, was used for that purpose, having been used first as a private dwelling.

In 1867 the Central school was built. The first principal was Miss Mary Mills, in 1868. In 1875 Prof. John N. Foster was engaged as principal, who held the position until the school burned in 1881.

That you may gain some idea of the number of children in that school, I quote the following report for the year ending June 30, 1876.

Number of children of school age in this district.	604
There have been enrolled.	614
Number enrolled twice.	26
Actual number in school.	528

Many others took a deep interest in the city, among them the well-known captain, the late E. B. Ward. Its land was valuable for its great pine forests and underlaid salt. Thus the village came, and grew into a city, and the little school came and grew into many others, and lives now only in the memories of those who knew it while it lived.

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